

Pedo-Baptist Bulwarks

OF THE
BAPTISTS' POSITION.

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There is one passage in God's word, that no amount of twisting can make serve the theory of infant sprinkling; therefore rather than expose themselves to indefensible criticism, the great scholars and historians among the Pedo-baptists, have generally supported the Baptists in commenting on this passage. It is found in Romans 6, 3:4. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." These two verses teach most beautifully and clearly the true "symbolism" of the ordinance of baptism. To help establish believers in "the faith once delivered to the saints," I herewith quote what some of the greatest

scholars and thinkers of other communions say, in reference to this celebrated passage, in which the great apostle of the gentiles embodied his inspired idea as to the inward spiritual thought, of the outward visible emblem.

1 Methodists. John Wesley in his famous "Notes" on the New Testament says in commenting on Romans 6, 4. "Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion,—that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory, (glorious power) of the Father, so we also by the same power, should rise again. And as he lives a new life in heaven, so we should walk in newness of life."

Dr. Adam Clarke, in his celebrated commentary, says on this passage: "It is probable that the apostle here alludes to the mode of administering baptism by immersion, the whole body being put under the water: which seemed to say, the man is drowned, is dead; and when he came up out of the water, he seemed to have a

resurrection to life; the man is risen again, he is alive." Benson also admits the passage to refer to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.

2. Presbyterians. Rev. Thos. Chalmers, D. D., LL.D., says on this passage: "The original meaning of the word baptism is immersion, and though we regard it as a point of indifferency whether the ordinance so named be performed in this way or by sprinkling, yet we doubt not that the prevalent style in the apostle's days was by an actual submerging of the whole body under water. We advert to this for the purpose of throwing light on the analogy that is instituted in these verses. Jesus Christ by death, underwent this sort of baptism, even immersion under the surface of the ground, whence he soon emerged again by his resurrection. We, by being baptized into his death, are conceived to have made a similar translation. In the act of descending under the water of baptism to have resigned an old life; and in

the act of ascending to emerge into a second or new life."

The learned Schaff says on this passage, Rom. 6 : 3 : "The meaning of *baptizo* in this passage is undoubtedly immerse, and the whole force and beauty of the illustration, lies in the very allusion to the act of immersion and emersion."

Dr. James McKnight says on Rom. 6 : 4, "Christ's baptism was not the baptism of repentance, for he never committed any sin; but he submitted to be baptized, that is, to be buried under the water by John, and then raised out again."

3. Episcopalians. Conybeare and Howson say: "It is needless to add that baptism was (unless in exceptional cases) administered by immersion, the convert being plunged beneath the surface of the water, to represent his death to the life of sin, and then raised from this momentary burial to represent his resurrection to the life of righteousness. It must be a subject of regret that the general discontinuance of

this original form of baptism, though perhaps necessary in our northern climates, has rendered obscure to popular apprehension some very important passages of Scripture." See "Life of St. Paul."

Archdeacon Farrar, D. D., F. R. S., says in his famous, "Life of St. Paul": "The life of the christian being hid with Christ in God, his death with Christ is a death to sin, his resurrection with Christ is a resurrection to life. The dipping under the waters of baptism, is his union with Christ's death; his rising out of the waters of baptism is a resurrection with Christ and the birth to a new life."

Canon Liddon, in his "Bampton Lectures," page 346, says: "As the neophyte (*i. e.*, new convert) is plunged beneath the waters, so the old nature is slain and buried with Christ. As Christ crucified and entombed, rises with resistless might from the grave which can no longer hold him, so, to the eye of faith, the christian is raised from the bath of regen-

eration, radiant with a new and supernatural life. His gaze is to be fixed henceforth on Christ, who, being raised from the dead, dieth no more."

Dean Goulburn of Norwich Cathedral, Eng., (who was elected from the Episcopal scholars, to deliver the "Bampton Lectures" one year, as was Canon Liddon, of St. Paul's Cathedral, another year), says on page 18, "There can be no doubt that baptism when administered in the pristine and most correct form, is a divinely constituted emblem of bodily resurrection. . . . Animation having been for one instant suspended beneath the water; a type this of the interruption of man's energies by death; the body is lifted up again into the air by way of expressing emblematically, the new birth of resurrection."

The Episcopalians are the last to deny that immersion was the apostolic mode of baptism, especially as their rubric commands their ministers in the "public

baptism of infants," "to dip it in the water discreetly and warily."

I will now give you one extract from the pen of Dr. Paine, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Congregational Theological Seminary at Bangor, Maine, U. S. He teaches his students that immersion prevailed in all the apostolic churches. When charged by some of his Congregational brethren with Baptist sentiments, he gave them the following trenchant reply, in an article in the "*Christian Mirror*," of Aug. [3rd, 1875. "As to the question of fact, the testimony is ample and decisive. No matter of church history is clearer. The evidence is all one way, and all church historians of any repute agree in accepting it. We cannot claim even originality in teaching it in a Congregational Seminary; and we really feel guilty of a kind of anachronism in writing an article to insist upon it. It is a point on which ancient, mediæval and modern historians alike, Catholics and

Protestants, Lutherans and Calvinists, have no controversy; and the simple reason for this uniformity is, that the statements of the early fathers are so clear, and the light shed upon these statements from the early customs of the church is so conclusive, that no historian who cares for his reputation would dare to deny it, and no historian who is worthy of the name would wish to. There are some historical questions concerning the early church on which the most learned writers disagree . . . but on this one, of the early practice of immersion, the most distinguished antiquarians,—such as Bingham, Agosti, Coleman, Smith; and historians,—such as Mosheim, Giesler, Hase, Neander, Millman, Schaff, and Alzog (Catholic) hold a common language. . . . Any scholar who denies that immersion was the baptism of the Christian church for thirteen centuries, betrays utter ignorance or sectarian blindness.”

